



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
ATTORNEY GENERAL GEORGE JEPSEN

**State Officials: State Receivership of Amistad Schooner
Ends with Dissolution of Amistad America, Inc.**

New organization takes ownership of vessel, court proceedings come to a close

For immediate release

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HARTFORD – A state superior court judge has issued orders that bring to a close the state’s successful legal actions to stabilize the state’s flagship by officially dissolving the now-defunct charitable organization, Amistad America, Inc., and ending a state receivership that has overseen the organization’s primary asset, the Amistad schooner, since August 2014, state Office of Policy and Management Secretary Ben Barnes and Attorney General George Jepsen said today.

The state [sought, and was granted, the receivership](#) in order to secure and stabilize the organization’s assets after revelations that Amistad America’s tax-exempt status had been revoked by the Internal Revenue Service and that the organization had accumulated significant debts. Over the course of the receivership, a court-approved advisory committee made recommendations about the ship’s future operation, including the formation of a new nonprofit organization to oversee the ship as well as a Connecticut-based, education-centric mission for the new organization.

The new organization, Discovering Amistad, Inc., was incorporated in July 2015. Ownership of the schooner was transferred to the new organization on November 6, 2015, following allocation of state bond funds for the purchase of the ship by the new organization. Final orders terminating the receivership and dissolving Amistad America were entered by Superior Court Judge Antonio Robaina on November 19.

“I am glad the Amistad will get a new start,” said Secretary Barnes. “It is an important educational tool about a sad chapter of our nation’s history and a symbol of Connecticut’s commitment to liberty for all. I appreciate that the Attorney General and state agencies worked so well together to get this done.”

"The goal of this receivership was to stabilize the situation surrounding the Amistad and to chart a path forward for it responsible ownership and governance," said Attorney General Jepsen.

"The Amistad is worth saving, not just because state of Connecticut has made significant investments over the years; the ship is a vital historical and cultural asset, with a powerful, moving and relevant story to tell. To that end, the receivership process has largely been a success. The prior organization, beset by dysfunction, is dissolved and its debts resolved. Discovering Amistad – a new organization better qualified to manage the Amistad – has formed in its place. To be sure, there remain challenges to the Amistad's future success, which will require continued vigilance. I applaud and thank the new board members for stepping up to accept those challenges. I also thank others who have worked hard to give the Amistad the best second chance possible, including the Governor, OPM and DECD; my staff; and the receiver, Kate Sacks."

The officials praised the court-appointed receiver, Attorney Katherine B. Sacks of New Haven, for her exemplary work in this case over the past 15 months.

The Attorney General thanked his staff, especially Assistant Attorneys General Karen Gano and Mark Kohler, head of his Special Litigation Department, for their work on this matter.

[Click here to view the court docket record of the Amistad receivership.](#)

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